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Message Text

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44
ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 CU-02 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /076 W
---------- 125587
R 121430Z FEB 75
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1410
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, KE
SUBJECT: GOK VS PARLIAMENT: DANGER OF CONFRONTATION
RECEDES

REF: NAIROBI 1074

1. FIRST WEEK OF PARLIAMENT HAS PASSED AS UNEVENTUALLY AS STATE OPENING REPORTED REFTEL, WITH GOK MAKING NUMBER OF MOVES THAT HAVE HELPED DEFUSE POSSIBILITY OF CONFRONTATION WITH ITS BACKBENCH CRITICS. THESE MOVES INCLUDE ACQUIESCING IN THE UNOPPOSED ELECTION OF JOHN SERONEY AS DEPUTY SPEAKER AND CREATING A 22-MEMBER SELECT COMMITTEE TO SCHEDULE PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION. COMMITTEE INCLUDES NOT ONLY MANY GOVERNMENT LEADERS, AMONG THEM VP MOI, FINANCE AND PLANNING MINISTER KIBAKI AND COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER KIANO, BUT ALSO THREE OF GOK'S MORE PROMINENT CRITICS, RUBIA, SERONEY AND SHIKUKU. WHILE GOVERNMENT'S PRIMARY INTENT IN CREATING SELECT COMMITTEE IS TO GENERATE BROADER UNDERSTANDING OF AND SUPPORT FOR ITS LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM, INCLUSION OF CRITICS IS A HELPFUL
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GESTURE AT THIS TIME.

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2. GOK ALSO WON SPEEDY APPROVAL OF ITS COMPROMISE BILL ON USE OF SWAHILI, UNDER WHICH BILLS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS WILL BE DRAFTED IN ENGLISH BUT DEBATES WILL BE IN SWAHILI. SOME MP'S HAD BEEN CONCERNED THAT PRESIDENT'S SUDDEN ANNOUNCEMENT IN JULY 1974 THAT SWAHILI WOULD HENCEFORTH BE THE QTE NATIONAL UNQTE LANGUAGE WOULD IMPAIR ASSEMBLY'S ABILITY TO CONSIDER MORE TECHNICAL SUBJECTS. NOW THAT BILLS CAN BE DRAFTED IN ENGLISH, IT ANTICIPATED THAT DEBATE OF MORE TECHNICAL ASPECTS WILL ALSO PROBABLY LAPSE INTO THAT LANGUAGE.

3. MOOD OF PARLIAMENT WILL BE EASIER TO GAUGE TOWARD END OF MONTH, WHEN DEBATE ON PRESIDENT'S SPEECH EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED. THIS DEBATE PROVIDES OPEN-ENDED OP-PORTUNITY FOR MP'S TO COMMENT ON STATE OF NATION, BUT SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT. IN FACT, FOR REASONS CITED ABOVE, DANGER OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ASSEMBLY AND GOK APPEARS FOR THE MOMENT TO HAVE RECEDED.

4. SAME IS TRUE OF UNIVERSITY, WHERE STUDENTS CONTINUE TO ATTEND CLASSES WITHOUT INCIDENT, AND ON THE LABOR FRONT, WHERE GOK'S RECENT ESTABLISHMENT OF A WAGE REVIEW BOARD HAS TEMPORARILY MUTED UNION CALLS FOR HIGHER PAY.
MARSHALL

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Executive Order: N/A
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